

Message Text

SECRET

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17

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-11 OMB-01 CU-02 DHA-02 SCA-01 /086 W

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R 280750Z FEB 76

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2900

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T BAGHDAD 0277

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IZ

SUBJ: GOI ORDERS ALL SINGLE PEOPLE TO VACATE THEIR HOUSES OR
APARTMENTS

1. BAGHDAD DAILY, ATH-THAWRA, REPORTED STATEMENT ON FEB. 22 BY
UNDERSECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR CONFIRMING THAT ALL
SINGLE PERSONS IN BAGHDAD HAVE BEEN ORDERED BY THE MINISTRY OF THE
INTERIOR TO VACATE THEIR HOUSES OR APARTMENTS. ACCORDING TOO UNDER-
SECRETARY, PURPOSE OF THIS ACTION IS TO PROTECT THE FAMILY,
SOCIETY, AND PUBLIC ORDER. HE SAID THAT MINISTRY'S ACTION IS WITHIN
THE DIRECTIVES OF THE JULY 17 REVOLUTION TO BUILD A FLOURISHING
SOCIALIST SOCIETY, AND SHOULD ALSO EASE THE HOUSING SHORTAGE
FOR FAMILIES. HE ADDED THAT EXEMPTIONS WILL BE MADE FOR
STUDENTS, CERTIFIED AS SUCH BY THE IRAQI STUDENT UNION, AND
FOR MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS.

2. ACCORDING TO OUR LOCAL CONTACTS, REGULATION IS BEING CARRIED

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OUT EVEN IN CASES OF ELDERLY WIDOWS WHO HAVE LIVED IN SAME

APARTMENTS FOR THIRTY OR FOURTY YEARS. IT IS APPARENTLY ASSUMED THAT ALL SINGLE PEOPLE CAN FIND SOME MARRIED RELATIVES WITH WHOM THEY CAN LIVE. ACCORDING TO LOCAL RUMOR, ACTION WAS TRIGGERED WHEN RCC MEMBER LEARNED THAT SOME ARMY OFFICERS WERE KEEPING APARTMENTS IN BAGHDAD FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR RECREATION. REGIME'S REACTION WAS TYPICAL OVER-KILL TO REAL OR IMAGINED WRONGDOING. ACTION IS REMINISCENT OF EDICT ISSUED BY GOI DURING AREF'S REGIME ABOLISHING ALL SECRETARIAL POSITIONS IN THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT AFTER AREF HAD HEARD RUMORS OF IMMORAL LIAISONS BETWEEN CIVIL SERVANTS AND THEIR SECRETARIES.

3. SUCH HEAVY-HANDED MEASURES, WHICH WOULD GENERATE A REBELLION IN MOST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, SEEM TO MAKE LITTLE APPARENT IMPRESSION IN IRAQ WHERE THERE IS NO WELL-ESTABLISHED TRADITION CONCERNING THE PROPER LIMITS FOR THE EXERCISE OF GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY, EXCEPT ON THE PART OF A SMALL AND POWERLESS WESTERNIZED MINORITY. THE REGIME NO DOUBT BELIEVES THAT THE DISAFFECTION OF PEOPLE FORCED FROM THEIR HOMES WILL BE BALANCED BY THE GRATITUDE OF FAMILIES WHO CAN NOW MOVE INTO MORE ADEQUATE ACCOMMODATIONS.

4. NEVERTHELESS, SUCH PRECIPITATE ACTIONS BY THE REGIME MUST GENERATE RESENTMENT AND A LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT WHICH IN TURN CONTRIBUTES TO THE CHRONIC INSTABILITY WHICH HAS CHARACTERIZED IRAQ'S POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE BAATH REGIME'S EARLY EXCESSES SEEM TO BE MODERATING, IT WILL OBVIOUSLY BE SOME TIME BEFORE ITS BEHAVIOR, BOTH IN INTERNAL AND IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, BECOMES REASONABLE BY WESTERN STANDARDS.

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